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SUBJECT: TEXT OF THE IMPLEMENTING DECREE FOR VIETNAM'S  
ORDINANCE ON RELIGION

Reftel 04 Hanoi 2009

1. Below in paragraph 2 is an unofficial Embassy translation of the implementing decree for Vietnam's Ordinance on Belief and Religion (reftel). Although the decree is dated March 1, it was not released to the public until late March 7. Embassy and ConGen Ho Chi Minh City will report septel our and our religious contacts' impressions of the implementing decree.

2. //Begin text//

Hanoi, March 1, 2005

No. 22/2005/ND-CP

Government Decree

Guidance on implementing a number of articles in the  
Ordinance on Belief and Religion

The Government

Based on the Law on the Organization of the Government dated  
December 25, 2001;

Based the Ordinance on Belief and Religion dated June 18,  
2004;

As requested by the Chairman of the Government Committee for  
Religious Affairs

## Chapter 1

### General Provisions

#### Article 1. Object and scope of regulations

This Decree is to regulate the organization of festivals for religious beliefs, religious activities by believers, religious officials and religious organizations and the responsibilities of state agencies in implementing the management of belief and religious activities.

#### Article 2. Citizens' freedom of belief and religion

The State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam respects and ensures its citizens' right to freedom of belief and religion and the right to follow or not follow a religion. No one is permitted to violate these freedoms.

Acts to force citizens to follow a religion or renounce their faith, the abuse of the right to freedom of belief and religion to undermine peace, independence and national unity; incite violence or to wage war; disseminate information against prevailing State law and policies; sow division among the people, ethnic groups and religions; cause public disorder; do harm to other people's lives, health, dignity, honor and property; hinder people from exercising their rights and public obligations; spread superstitious practices and commit acts to breach the law are not allowed.

## Chapter 2

### Religious Festivals

#### Article 3. Religious Festivals

Religious festivals are a form of organized religious activity, showing respect, memory and appreciation for those who have rendered great services to the country and the community; activities to worship divinities and traditional symbols as well as other folklore belief activities that represent fine historical, cultural, moral and social values.

#### Article 4. Organization of festivals

1. There must be consent by the People's Committees of provinces and centrally controlled cities (hereinafter called the provincial level People's Committees) for the organization of the following religious festivals in their localities:

- a) Religious festivals to be organized for the first time;
- b) Religious festivals to be resumed after many years of interruption;
- c) Religious festivals that are organized periodically but with the content, time or venue changed.

12. For the organization of those religious festivals which are not regulated by Item 1 of this Article, the organizer shall have the responsibility to notify the People's Committees of communes, wards or towns (hereinafter called People's Committees at the commune level) in writing about the time, venue, content and the names of the festival organizing board members 15 days in advance. In the event that natural disaster, epidemic, security issues, public disorder or that the organization of the festival might have a negative impact on the social life of the localities, the commune level People's Committees shall consider, make a decision and promptly notify the festival organizing board.

#### Article 5. Process, procedures, deadline for consent

1. For the organization of those religious festivals regulated under Item 1 of this article, the organizer shall have the responsibility to send in application forms to the provincial level People's Committees 30 days in advance

2. The application packet includes:

- a) A proposal concerning the festival organization, which clearly states the festival's historical origin, size, time, venue, plan, program and content;
- b) The names of the festival's organizing board members.

3. Within 10 days of the receipt of a complete application, the provincial level People's Committee shall have the responsibility to consider and make a decision; in case of disapproval, the response must be in writing with clearly stated reasons.

### Chapter 3

#### Religious organizations

##### Section 1

#### Registering activities and recognition of religious organizations

#### Article 6. Registration of religious activities

1. For religious activities, the organization shall have the responsibility to submit its application to the competent state agency as regulated under item 3 of this article.

2. The application packet includes:

- a) A registration form stating clearly the organization's name, origin, development process in Vietnam, principles, goals, scope of activities, number of believers at the time of registration, possible venue for office and place of worship;
- b) A summary of religious tenets;
- c) A list of possible heads of the organization who must be Vietnamese citizens and who have sufficient capacity of civil status and prestige in the organization.

3. Registration authority

- a) The Government Committee for Religious Affairs grants licenses for an organization to operate in multiple provinces and centrally run cities;
- b) Provincial level committees for religious affairs grant licenses for an organization operating in a single province and centrally run city.

4. Deadline for response:

- a) Within 60 days of the receipt of a complete application, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to grant a license for the organization; in case of refusal to grant the license, a response must be in writing with clearly stated reasons.
- b) Within 45 days of the receipt of a complete application, the provincial level committee for religious affairs shall have the responsibility to grant a license for the organization; in case of refusal to grant the license, a response must be in writing with clearly stated reasons.

#### Article 7. Religious operations of an organization after a

license is granted

1. Organizations that have already registered their religious operation are entitled to:

a) Organize religious services, conduct ceremonies, carry out missionary work and preach at registered religious establishments;

b) Elect the organization's heads and open classes to refresh knowledge of religious tenets;

c) Repair, renovate and upgrade facilities belonging to the belief and religious establishments;

d) Conduct charitable and humanitarian activities

2. While conducting religious activities regulated by Item 1 of this article, the organization shall obey the regulations of this decree and other related legal documents.

#### Article 8. Recognition of religious organizations

1. Registered organizations shall submit their applications to the competent state agency as regulated under Item 2, Article 16, of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

2. The application packet includes:

a) A proposal for the recognition of the religious organization which clearly states the organization's name, number of believers, scope of activities at the time of the proposal, main venue of the organization;

b) The organization's tenets and canons;

c) The organization's charter and regulations;

d) The organization's registration for religious operation issued by the competent state agency;

e) Certification of stable religious operation by the provincial level committee for religious affairs where the organization's main venue is located. The time of stable religious operation is counted from the date of the organization's registration for operation, and is stipulated as follows:

20 years for organizations present in Vietnam after the effective date of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

One year for organizations present in Vietnam up to 20 years before the effective date of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

For those organizations present in Vietnam for less than 20 years by the effective date of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion, the stable time for religious operation includes the time from the organization's formation to the effective date of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion, as well as the time between the organization's registration and the achievement of 20 years of stable activity.

3. Deadline for response

a) Within 90 days of the receipt of the legitimate application papers, the Prime Minister shall consider for a decision to recognize the organization as stipulated under Point a, Item 2, Article 16, Ordinance on Belief and Religion; in case of refusal to recognize, the response must be in writing with clearly stated reasons.

b) Within 60 days, from the receipt date of the legitimate application papers, the chairman of the provincial level people's committee shall consider a decision to recognize the organization as stipulated under Point b, Item 2, Article 16, Ordinance on Belief and Religion; in case of refusal to recognize, the response must be in writing with clearly stated reasons.

#### Section 2

Establishing, splitting and merging subordinate organizations

#### Article 9. Conditions for establishing, splitting and merging subordinate organizations

1. The establishment of subordinate organizations must meet the following conditions:

a) The organization to be established must be in the system of religious organizations accepted by the State;

b) The number of believers in the locality meets the conditions stipulated under the religious organization's charter and regulations.

2. Splitting subordinate organizations must meet the

following conditions:

- a) There is the religious organization's request to split;
- b) The number of believers of the subordinate organizations is large and the area is a difficult one in which to manage and organize religious activities;
- c) After the organization is split, it still belongs to the organizational system as regulated in the charter and regulations accepted by the State.

13. Merging subordinate organizations must meet the following conditions:

- a) There is the religious organization's request to merge;
- b) After the organization is merged, it still belongs to the organizational system as regulated in the charter and regulations accepted by the State.

Article 10. Process, procedures on establishing, splitting, merging subordinate organizations

11. Request from the religious organization is needed for establishing, splitting or merging subordinate organizations.

12. Request for establishing, splitting and merging subordinate organizations must state clearly the following contents:

- a) Name of the subordinate organization to be established; name of the subordinate organization before it is split or merged and possible name of the subordinate organization after it is split or merged;
- b) Reasons for establishing, splitting or merging;
- c) Number of current believers and number of believers before and after it is split or merged;
- d) Scope of religious activities;
- e) Facilities, the organization's headquarters

13. Deadline for response.

a) Within 60 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate application packet, the Prime Minister shall consider, decide and respond to the religious organization as stipulated by Item 3, Article 17, Ordinance on Belief and Religion;

b) Within 45 days from the receipt date of a complete and accurate application packet, the provincial People's Committee shall consider, decide and respond to the religious organization as stipulated by Item 2, Article 17, Ordinance on Belief and Religion;

### Section 3

Registration of religious congregations, orders, monasteries and similar forms of collective religious practice

Article 11. Registration of religious congregations

11. Congregations established by religious organizations purely for the purpose of religious rites shall not have to register their activities with the competent State agency.

12. Religious congregations that do not fall in the category specified in Item 1 of this Article shall have their activities registered with the competent State agency as stipulated by Item 2, Article 19 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

13. Application packet includes:

- a) Registration form that includes name of the religious organization to which the congregation belongs, name of the congregation and names of the individuals responsible for activities conducted by the congregation;
- b) List of persons involving in leading the congregation;
- c) Regulations on the activities of the congregation that provide specifications of goals, organizational structure and management system.

14. Forty five days after turning in a complete and accurate application packet, and if the competent State agency does not have any other opinions, the congregations are allowed to operate according to the registered plan.

Article 12. Registration of religious orders, monasteries and other forms of collective religious practice

11. The head of a religious order, monastery [or] another form of collective religious practice shall have the responsibility to send a packet to a competent state agency specified at Item 2 of Article 19 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

12. The packet includes:

a) An application for registration that specifies the name of the religious order, monastery [or] the other form of collective religious practice, head office or work address, the name of the head of the religious order, monastery [or] the other form of collective religious practice;

b) List of religious officials;

c) Operation rules, regulations or charter, specific guiding principles, operation purposes, organization and management structure, material conditions, social activities, [and] international activities (if any) of the religious order, monastery [or] the other form of collective religious practice.

13. Within 60 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the competent state agency specified in Item 2, Article 19 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion shall have the responsibility to issue a registration certificate to the religious order, monastery [or] the other form of collective religious practice, [or] in case where it refuses [issuing a registration certificate], reply in writing specifying reason(s) for such refusal.

#### Section 4

The establishment and dissolution of schools and the opening of classes to train religious officials

Article 13. Establishment of schools to train religious officials.

11. Religious organizations wishing to establish schools to train religious officials shall forward the application packet to the Prime Minister.

12. The packet includes:

a) Application for the establishment of the school;

b) Project for the establishment of the school, which provides the following clarifications: name of the religious group wishing to establish the school; tentative name of the school; tentative venue for the school as part of the to be attached file on property; financing guaranty; facilities; goals, functions, tasks, size, curriculum, draft operations regulations, draft enrollment regulations, number of potential students, potential leadership of the school (personal files should be attached), and potential lecturers.

c) Comments in writing from the provincial People's Committee.

13. The subjects of Vietnamese history and laws are among the major subjects in the curriculum. The Ministry of Education and Training provides specific stipulations concerning teachers of those subjects and contents of the subjects.

14. Within 60 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the Prime Minister considers, makes decisions and responds to the religious organization.

Article 14. Dissolving schools to train religious officials.

11. Religious organizations wishing to dissolve their schools to train religious officials shall forward to the Prime Minister documents that provide clarification on the reasons for the dissolution and a plan to do so.

12. Property and assets belonging to the school shall be dealt with according to current legal provisions.

Article 15. Opening of classes to train religious officials

11. Religious organizations wishing to open classes to train religious officials shall forward application packets to the Chairman of the People's Committee of the province where the class is opened. The packet shall include class name, venue, demand, length, contents, curriculum, potential attendees and teachers.

12. Within 30 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the Chairman of the provincial People's Committee considers, makes decisions and responds to the religious organization.

#### Section 5

Bestowal of religious titles, appointment, election, nomination, and discharge of religious officials

Article 16. Registration on the bestowal of religious titles, appointment, election, and nomination of religious officials

1. Religious organizations have the responsibility to register the bestowal of religious titles and the appointment, election and nomination of religious officials with the Government Committee for Religious Affairs. Registration include memberships to the Buddhist Sangha Council and Executive Council and the bestowal of titles of Most Venerable, Venerable, Superior Nun and Senior Nun; memberships to the Catholic Church's Episcopal Council Standing Board as well as Heads of Episcopal Council subordinate Committees, and the bestowal of the title of Cardinal and the appointment of archbishops, coadjutor archbishops, bishops, coadjutor bishops, auxiliary bishops, administrators, heads of the Catholic orders; memberships to the central Management Board of the Protestant Church; memberships to the Cao Dai Holy See's Management Council, Church Council, and Executive Council, archbishops and the equivalent titles; memberships to the Hoa Hao Buddhism's Central Management Council; heads of schools to train religious officials; and those who hold equivalent positions of the other religious organizations.

2. Religious organizations have the responsibility to register with the provincial People's Committee the bestowal of religious titles and the appointment, election, and nomination of religious officials that do not fall in category stipulated at item 1 of this Article.

3. Application packet includes:

- a) Registration form that includes name, title, responsibility and domain of the religious officials.
- b) Curriculum vitas of the religious officials with certification of the People's Committee of the commune where the religious officials reside.
- c) Working background of the religious officials.

4. In cases in which a foreign element is involved, the bestowal of religious titles and the appointment, election and nomination of religious officials must obtain agreement in advance from the Government Committee on Religion.

5. Deadlines:

- a) After 45 days from turning in a complete and accurate application packet, and the Government Committee for Religious Affairs does not have any other opinions, the religious officials are allowed to conduct their activities under the registered titles.
- b) After 30 days from turning in a complete and accurate application packet, and the provincial People's Committee does not have any other opinions, the religious officials are allowed to conduct their activities under the registered titles.

Article 17. Notification on dismissal of religious officials.

Religious organizations have the responsibility to notify the competent State management agency mentioned in Items 1 & 2 of Article 16 of this Decree the dismissal of religious officials.

Article 18. Notification of the transfer of religious officials.

1. The transfer of religious officials shall be reported to the People's Committee of the district/town/provincially run cities from which the religious officials are transferred at least seven days before a decision on the transfer is made.

2. Such notification includes the names, titles, positions of the religious officials, reasons for the transfer and the locality to which the religious officials are transferred.

Article 19. Registering the transfer of religious officials.

1. Religious organizations have the responsibility to register the transfer of religious officials with the People's Committee of the district/town/provincially run cities to which the religious officials are transferred.

2. Registration packet includes:

- a) Registration form that contains information on names, titles, positions of the religious officials, reasons for



the transfer and the locality to which the religious officials are transferred.

b) Decision on the transfer.

c) Curriculum vitae of the religious officials with certification of the People's Committee of the commune where the religious officials reside.

13. After 30 days from turning in a complete and accurate application packet, and the People's Committee at the district level does not have any other opinions, the religious officials are allowed to conduct their religious activities at the registered place.

14. The registration packet concerning the transfer of religious officials who have been administratively punished by decisions of the Chairman of the provincial People's Committee, or those who have been dealt with for their violations to Criminal Law, shall have to address the Chairman of the People's Committee of the province to which the religious officials are transferred. Pending approval from the People's Committee of the province to which the religious officials are transferred, the religious officials are not allowed to conduct their religious activities at the registered place.

## Chapter 5

### Religious Activities

Article 20. Registration of the annual plan of religious activities of the local religious organizations.

1. Annually, before October 15, the person in charge of the local religious organization must forward a registration form concerning the religious activities to be conducted in the following year to the People's Committee at the commune level.

2. The registration form includes information on the organizers, the hosts, timing and venues for the activities.

3. After 30 days from turning in a complete and accurate registration form, and the People's Committee at the commune level does not have any other opinions, the local religious organization is allowed to conduct their registered activities.

Article 21. Religious activities beyond those mentioned in the annual plan of religious activities of the local religious organizations.

1. Religious activities beyond those mentioned in Articles 18 and 25 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion shall have to follow the following stipulations:

a) Religious activities with the participation of believers from several districts, precincts, towns and cities within one province, or from several provinces and centrally run cities, must be approved by the People's Committee of the province where the activity takes place.

b) Religious activities with the participation of believers from one single district, precinct, town and city must be approved by the People's Committee of the district where the activity takes place.

2. Local religious organizations have the responsibility to send an application packet that includes information on organizers, the hosts, timing and venues for the activities.

3. Within 15 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate form, the competent State management agency stipulated in points a & b of Item 1 of this Article has the responsibility to respond in writing, and state the reasons for not approving (if any).

## Section 2

### Registration of persons who lead a religious life

Article 22. Registration of persons who want to lead a religious life

1. Within seven days from the admission of individuals into places of religious worship in order for them to lead a religious life, persons in charge of the places of religious worship have the responsibility to register such admittance with the People's Committee of the commune where the place of religious worship is located.

2. Registration packet includes:

a) List of the persons who get admitted into places of religious worship in order for them to lead a religious life.

b) Curriculum vitae of the persons admitted into places of religious worship in order for them to lead a religious life with the certification of the People's Committee of the commune where the place of religious worship is located.

c) Approval from parents or guardians for adolescents who want to lead a religious life.

### Section 3

#### Conferences and Congresses of Religious Organizations

Article 23. Conferences or congresses of local religious organizations.

1. Local religious organizations wishing to convene their annual conferences or congresses shall forward an application packet to the People's Committee of the district where the conferences/congresses take place.

2. The application packet includes:

a) Application form which provide clarifications on reasons to conduct the conferences/congresses, possible attendees, number of participants, program, timing and venue.

b) Report on the activities of the local religious organization.

3. Within 10 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate application form, the People's Committee at the district level has the responsibility to respond in writing and state the reasons for not approving (if any).

Article 24. Conferences and congresses of religious organizations at the national level

1. Religious organizations wishing to convene conferences and congresses at the national level shall send the application packet to the Government Committee for Religious Affairs.

2. The application packet includes:

a) Application form which provide clarifications on reasons to conduct the conferences/congresses, possible attendees, number of participants, program, timing and venue.

b) Comments in writing of the People's Committee of the province where the event takes place.

c) Report on the activities of the local religious organization.

d) Chapters or Regulations or revised Chapters or Regulations (if any.)

3. Within 30 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate form, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs has the responsibility to respond in writing, and state the reasons for not approving (if any).

Article 25. Conferences and congresses of religious organizations not included in Articles 24 & 25 of this Decree

1. Application packets concerning conferences and congresses of religious organizations not included in Articles 24 & 25 of this Decree shall be forwarded to the People's Committee of the province where the event takes place.

2. The application packet includes:

a) Application form that provide clarifications on reasons to conduct the conferences/congresses, possible attendees, number of participants, program, timing and venue, and others.

b) Report on activities of the local religious organization.

3. Within 30 days from the receipt of a complete and accurate form, the provincial People's Committee has the responsibility to respond in writing, and state the reasons for not approving (if any).

### Section 4

Religious ritual festivities taking place beyond the enclosure of a religious establishment

Article 26. Religious ritual festivities taking place beyond the enclosure of a religious establishment

1. A religious organization that organizes religious ritual festivities beyond the enclosure of the religious establishment shall have the responsibility to send a written request to the competent state agency specified at



Article 25 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion.

12. The written request shall specify the title(s) of the religious ritual festivity(ies), the organizer(s), contents, program, time, location, scale, [and] participants of the of the religious ritual festivity(ies).

13. Within 15 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate application packet, the People's Committee of the district shall have the responsibility to reply in writing [the application packet for] the religious ritual festivity(ies) specified in Item 1 of Article 25 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion, [and] in case where it rejects [the application] specify reason(s) for such rejection.

14. Within 30 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate application packet, the People's Committee of the province shall have the responsibility to reply in writing [the application packet for] the religious ritual festivity(ies) specified at Item 2, Article 25 of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion, [and] in case where it rejects [the application] specify reason(s) for such rejection.

## Section 5

Preaching of a religious official beyond the enclosure of a religious establishment

Article 27. Preaching of religious official beyond the enclosure of a religious establishment

1. A religious official that preaches beyond the enclosure of a religious establishment shall have the responsibility to send a packet to the People's Committee of the district where the preaching shall be conducted.

2. The packet shall include:

- a) A written request that specifies the reason(s) for preaching beyond the enclosure of the religious establishment, contents, program, time, location, organizer(s), [and] participants [at the preaching];
- b) A written expression of opinion of the affiliated religious organization or the religious organization that is directly in charge of the religious official;

3. Within 30 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate application packet, the People's Committee of the district shall have the responsibility to reply in writing, [and] in case where it rejects [the application] specify reason(s) for such rejection.

## Section 6

Renovation, upgrades, [and] new construction of religious facilities

Article 28. Renovation, [and] upgrades of religious facilities not requiring construction permits  
When the repair [and/or] renovation of a religious facility does not alter the architecture, load-bearing structure and safety of the facility, it is not required to apply for a construction permit, but before doing such repair [and/or] renovation, the person in charge of that religious establishment must send a written notification to the People's Committee of the local commune.

Article 29. Renovation, [and] upgrades of religious facilities requiring construction permits

1. For doing the repair [and/or] renovation of a religious facility that does not fall within Article 28 of this Decree, or constructing a new religious facility, the person in charge of that religious establishment shall have to send a construction-permit-application packet to the People's Committee of the province.

2. The packet shall include:

- a) An application letter for a construction permit;
- b) A drawing of the construction design;
- c) Documents on land-use rights as required by the legislation on land use;
- d) Approval in writing of the provincial-level state management authority for religious affairs.

3. Within 20 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate application packet, the People's Committee of the province shall have the responsibility to issue the construction permit to the religious establishment.

## Section 7

Collections organized by [those that run] worship places  
[and/or] religious organizations

Article 30. Collections organized by [those that run]  
worship places [and/or] religious organizations

11. [Those that run] worship place(s) [and/or] religious organization(s) shall have the responsibility to send a written notification of their [planned] organization of a collection to a competent state agency specified in Item 3 of this Article 15 days in advance.

12. The written notification shall specify the purpose(s), scale, mode [and] time of the collection, [and] the mechanism for managing and ways for using the collected assets.

13. State agencies to receive notifications of collections of [those that run] worship place(s) [and/or] religious organization(s):

a) If a collection is to be organized within the area of a commune, the notification shall be sent to the People's Committee of the commune where the collection shall be organized;

b) If a collection is to be organized beyond the area of a commune but within the area of a district, the notification shall be sent to the People's Committee of the district where the collection shall be organized;

c) If a collection is to be organized beyond the area of a district, the notification shall be sent to the People's Committee of the province where the collection shall be organized.

14. State agencies that are notified by [those that run] worship place(s) [and/or] religious organization(s) of their organization of collection shall have the responsibility to supervise the implementation in accordance with the notified contents.

15. [Those that run] worship place(s) [and/or] religious organization(s) that organize a collection must ensure the publicity and transparency of the collected amounts, including their distribution, [and] must not abuse the name of the worship place(s) [and/or] religious organization(s) to make collection for their personal interests or illegal purposes.

## Section 8

International activities of religious organizations,  
believers and religious officials

Article 31. Inviting foreign organization(s) [and/or]  
individuals to Vietnam

11. A religious organization, believer, or religious official that invites foreign organization(s) [and/or] individuals to Vietnam for carrying out religion-related international cooperation activities shall have the responsibility to send an application packet to the Government Committee for Religious Affairs.

12. The packet shall include:

a) A written request that specifies the reason(s) for the invitation, contents of cooperation activities, tentative program, time and location for organizing [the activities];

b) A brief introduction of major activities of the foreign organization(s) [and/or] individuals.

13. Within 30 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to reply in writing, [and] in case where it rejects [the packet], specify reason(s) for such rejection.

Article 32. Participation in religious activities in  
foreign countries

11. A religious organization that participates in religious activities in a foreign country shall have the responsibility to send an application packet to the Government Committee for Religious Affairs.

12. The packet shall include:

a) A written request that specifies the reason(s), purpose(s), program, time, [and] location of the religious activities to take place in the foreign country that the Vietnamese religious organization [and/or] individual(s) are invited to participate;

b) An invitation to participate in the activities in the

foreign country.

13. Within 30 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to reply in writing, [and] in case where it rejects [the packet], specify reason(s) for such rejection.

Article 33. Participation in religious training courses in foreign countries

1. A religious official that participates in a religious training course in a foreign country shall have the responsibility to send an application packet to the Government Committee for Religious Affairs.

2. The packet shall include:

a) A written request for participating in the training course, specifying the reason(s), purpose(s), contents, program [and] time of the training;

b) A letter of acceptance for training by the foreign religious organization [or] individual [that conducts the training];

c) A letter of approval by the religious organization that is directly in charge [of the religious official].

3. Within 45 days from the date of receipt of a complete and accurate packet, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to reply in writing, [and] in case where it rejects [the packet], specify reason(s) for such rejection.

Article 34. Exit [from Vietnam] of religious officials who do not fall within the cases provided in Article 32 and Article 33 of this Decree

Religious officials who exit [from Vietnam] in cases that are not provide for in Article 32 and Article 33 of this Decree shall follow the legislation on entry-exit procedures.

Article 35. Preaching of foreign religious officials in Vietnam

1. A religious organization that invites a foreign religious official to preach at a religious establishment in Vietnam shall have the responsibility to send a written request to the Government Committee for Religious Affairs, specifying the name of the foreign religious official, nationality, name of the foreign religious organization, program, time, location, organizer(s), [and] participants [in the preaching].

2. Within 30 days from the date of receipt of the written request, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to reply in writing, [and] in case where it rejects [the application packet], specify reason(s) for such rejection.

## Chapter V

### Implementation Provisions

Article 36. Responsibility of state management agencies for religious affairs

1. The Government Committee for Religious Affairs and local state management agencies for religious affairs shall exercise their functions, duties, [and] authority of state management for religious affairs as provided by the law.

2. In the implementation of the Ordinance on Belief and Religion and this Decree, the Government Committee for Religious Affairs shall have the responsibility to receive application packets, take the lead and coordinate with relevant Ministries and agencies in appraising [the applications], submit [the applications] to the Prime Minister and with authority delegated by the Prime Minister give replies to religious organizations. For cases that fall within the authority of People's Committees, state management agencies for religious affairs at the corresponding levels shall have the responsibility to receive application packets, coordinate with relevant agencies in appraising [the application packets], submit [the application packets] to the People's Committees and give replies to religious organizations.

Article 37. Implementation effect

This Decree takes effect 15 days from the date of its publication on the Official Gazette.  
Previous regulations that are contrary to this Decree are hereby repealed.

Article 38. Responsibility for implementation

¶1. Religious organizations, believers, officials and relevant organizations and individuals are responsible for the implementation of this Decree and other relevant legal regulations.

¶2. Ministers, Heads of Ministry-level Agencies, Heads of Agencies under the Government, Chairmen of People's Committees of provinces and central-level cities are responsible for the implementation of this Decree within their respective functions, duties, [and] authority.

FOR THE GOVERNMENT  
THE PRIME MINISTER  
(Signed & stamped)  
Phan Van Khai  
//End text//  
MARINE